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ABSTRACT

A survey was made of 600 business education teachers in secondary schools about their preferences concerning the content, length, and style of free-loan educational films. Teachers were also asked to name the best such film they had seen recently. The results of the survey are reported in tabular form. (EMH)

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MODERN TALKING PICTURE SERVICE / RESEARCH REPORT

What Business Education Teachers Want From Sponsored Films

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
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Modern Talking
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ABOUT THIS SURVEY

We undertook this survey in order to give film sponsors and producers some new and up-to-date information about the high school Business Education curriculum--a curriculum that should be of special interest to all of American business.

It is in this curriculum that many students receive their principal vocational training for business careers. At the same time, they begin to form attitudes toward the world of work.

Some non-vocational education also is offered in the Business Education department. For example, many schools find that a logical place to cover personal finance; or general economics, including how our free enterprise system works. When topical issues such as inflation, women's rights, the financing of health care, and energy and environment policy find their way into the school curriculum, it may well be in Business Education.

Modern Talking Picture Service has circulated films to Business Education teachers for many years on behalf of the many companies, associations and other organizations that sponsor them. A copy of our latest catalog of Business Education films is available free from any of the offices listed on the back of this report.

The questionnaire used in this survey was created by Modern and mailed by us, along with a film catalog, to a selection of secondary schools served by 19 of our 25 U. S. film libraries. It was addressed Attention: Business Education Supervisor.

596 questionnaires were returned with answers. The percentages given in this report are based on that figure.

We hope that you find the report interesting, and believe that it could be the starting point for planning your next film production. If you have any questions about it, just Ask Modern.

MODERN TALKING PICTURE SERVICE

FILM CONTENT

IN WHAT SUBJECT AREAS WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE FREE-LOAN SPONSORED FILMS?

Vocational Subjects

Careers in business	489 (82%)
Attitudes about work	397 (67%)
Business machines/office skills	344 (58%)
Data processing & accounting	281 (47%)
Business law	266 (45%)
Oral & written communications	239 (40%)
Women: challenges/opportunities	231 (39%)
Marketing & advertising	220 (37%)
Retailing	188 (32%)
Salesmanship	182 (31%)
Organization & management	130 (22%)
Minorities: challenges/opportunities	69 (12%)

General Education

Money & banking	327 (55%)
Understanding our business system	319 (54%)
Inflation	259 (43%)
Basic economics	201 (34%)
Energy, business & consumer	134 (22%)
Impact of technological change	123 (21%)
International trade & finance	77 (13%)
Corporate profiles	69 (12%)
Agri-business	68 (11%)
Environment & industry	62 (10%)
Industry profiles	61 (10%)
Minority enterprise	28 (5%)

Personal Economics

Using credit	380 (64%)
Savings & investment	331 (56%)
Budgeting	328 (55%)
Taxes	317 (53%)
Consumer competence	316 (53%)

The subject of greatest interest by far was careers in business, with an 82% response. Second, with 67%, was attitudes about work. That is related to career study; in fact, it was the most popular subject of all in our recent survey of career guidance people. Other vocational subjects also scored well in this survey of business education teachers.

Economics was the second general area of strong interest. The subjects we listed under the heading of personal economics all scored at least 53%, with a top rating of 64% for films about the use of credit. Our list of general education subjects commonly taught in business education courses was led by money & banking, 55% (but it became apparent that the educators were thinking about personal economics here, not monetary theory); understanding our business system, 54%; inflation, 43% (the most favored among the highly topical subjects); and basic economics, 34%. Write-ins, which were not heavy, were headed by insurance, with 12 votes.

FILM PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES

WHAT LENGTH FILMS DO YOU PREFER (RUNNING TIME IN MINUTES)?

1-10 minutes	3 (.5%)
10-15 minutes	27 (5%)
15-20 minutes	137 (23%)
20-25 minutes	182 (31%)
25-30 minutes	254 (43%)
30-40 minutes	121 (20%)
40-60 minutes	15 (3%)

The 25-30 minute category that tops this listing was also the first choice in our surveys of home economics, social studies and career guidance educators.

WHAT FILM STYLES DO YOU PREFER?

	Highest Interest	Considerable Interest	Indifferent
Documentary	177 (30%)	220 (37%)	80 (13%)
Drama	189 (32%)	215 (36%)	90 (15%)
Animated drawings	150 (25%)	247 (41%)	98 (16%)
Demonstration	291 (49%)	184 (31%)	34 (6%)

This is a rather even spread of choice, compared to the results of our home economics survey (where 64% asked for demonstration films) and our social studies survey (where 77% asked for documentaries). Regardless of general preferences, of course, the choice of a film style ultimately depends on the specific assignment. The figures add up to well over 100% because of multiple selections.

FILM USE

DO YOU THINK A USEFUL MINI-COURSE COULD BE BUILT AROUND ONE OR MORE FREE-LOAN FILMS?

Yes	420 (70%)
No	67 (11%)

This very positive response repeats the results we have obtained in private surveys conducted for several sponsors in connection with individual films.

As a second part of the question, we asked the respondents to write in the most suitable subject for a mini-course. The write-in was heavy. High vote was for personal economics--actually a variety of suggestions such as budgeting, checking accounts, family finance, credit and consumer education adding up to 136 (23% of all respondents). Next in favor was careers, with 82 write-ins (14%). Also noteworthy, with 20 to 24 votes apiece: general business, business law, taxes, data processing, attitudes.

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN BOOKING A SERIES OF SPONSORED FILMS?

Yes 400 (67%)
No 75 (13%)

As a second part of this question, we asked for a write-in indication of the ideal number of films in a series. 222 wrote in something in the 3 to 6 range. That's 37% of all respondents to the questionnaire and 79% of those who wrote in a figure here. 60 others asked for longer series.

WOULD YOU BE INTERESTED IN BOOKING SIMILAR FREE-LOAN MATERIAL IN VIDEOCASSETTE FORMAT?

Yes 204 (34%)
No 253 (42%)

As a second part of this question, we asked for comments. Most of those given referred, not surprisingly, to a lack of videocassette playing equipment. The other comments were almost all positive in tone, however, indicating interest and curiosity and citing such advantages as ease of use and suitability for individual use.

RELATED MATERIALS

DO YOU USE TEACHER'S GUIDES WHEN THEY ARE PROVIDED WITH FILMS?

Always 183 (31%)
Usually 340 (57%)
Rarely or never 53 (9%)

WOULD YOU LIKE TEACHER'S GUIDES--OR OTHER LITERATURE--TO BE PROVIDED ALONG WITH MORE FILMS?

518 (87%) indicated that they would.
Only 20 (3%) said no.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR 1ST, 2ND AND 3RD PREFERENCE AMONG THE MATERIALS LISTED BELOW, CONSIDERED AS SUPPLEMENTS TO FILMS.

Many of the teachers simply gave us checkmarks instead of rankings, so we have not attempted to weight the answers. The numbers of mentions:

Teacher's guide	446 (75%)	Product sample	199 (33%)
Wall chart or poster	273 (46%)	Test	197 (33%)
Student take-home literature	239 (40%)	Study prints	125 (21%)
Game	236 (40%)		

COMMENTS BY THE RESPONDENTS

Our questionnaire asked for general comments and observations about Business Education films--and we got lots of them.

Many comments show that Business Education teachers think highly of film. "A tremendous aid." "Wonderful supplemental. Gives spark to classroom--makes discussion much easier and more interesting." "Films add variety to the lecture-workbook format that is like the spice in the cake. It is an excellent change of pace. The students are 'educated' without knowing it."

Also: "Films are the next best thing to actual experience because they allow the students to become involved." "The students enjoy films and I'd like to show them as many as I can." "So much could be done in this area that is of fantastic interest to the students." "Films spark interest, reach students who do not read well."

And still more: "Business Education films are needed to emphasize the importance of business and the advantage of taking more business courses." "We have never had enough films in Business Education." "More films are needed in this area." "Films in Business Education will receive an enthusiastic welcome from all Business Education teachers."

The overriding critical comment is that many Business Education films are out of date. Although it may be only hair styles or clothing that date a film, our respondents report that these aspects distract students from the essential content of a film and in effect "turn them off."

The teachers had some additional suggestions for suiting films to students. "The films should entertain as well as inform." "The films must have an interesting story that captivates the students' minds. They should move rapidly, have good color and most of all good music background." "Students appreciate a story approach in a film with someone they can identify with." "Films made so student can picture himself as he might fit into this field of work."

"The students seem particularly interested in problem situations where an employee has to use good judgment. The answer does not always have to be given nor does it have to be a Pollyanna ending." "We need films that are as realistic as possible." "Show it only the way it is."

"Students also enjoy true cases of individuals such as business law cases involving wills, divorces, delinquency, evasion of bills, buying cars and motorcycles, accidents with motor vehicles."

"More instructional films need to be directed from a students' viewpoint, i. e., answering their questions, reacting to their attitudes and interests. Many of our films are directed by adults who are 'laying on' their adult views."

"Lecturing by adults or prissy behavior by students in films turns them off."

"Try to hold down the narration."

"So many of our students are unsure of their English that films must be extremely clear in action. If it's understandable with the sound shut off, it's probably good for us, and for many other schools and urban groups."

"We need additional films for 8th-9th graders." "We need films geared to 9th graders through 12th graders." "Most seem to be below the average high school level."

"Because I teach personal economics to high school seniors, film material should stress the problems likely to be encountered between the ages of 16 and 26. Examples: budget for college year, buying a second-hand car, contracting for summer job."

Some teachers suggested ways to make films more valuable. "A teacher's guide for all films would be very helpful." "Supplementary materials accompanying them are especially helpful." "I would be interested in a series of vocationally-oriented films with simple, easy-to-follow worksheets the students could complete either during or after the film." "Would be interested in films where kids can 'do' as well as watch and listen." "Each film should cause the audience to respond to a provocative question every 5 minutes. After each question, the film projector would be stopped for an interval to allow for audience response."

SOME OUTSTANDING FILMS

We asked the respondents to name the best films they recalled seeing in the past year in each of two categories: vocational preparation for business and general education about business. As it turns out, there are few truly vocational films, and many of those named were also nominated in the general education category. So we've combined the two in our tally.

The New York Stock Exchange was the runaway winner, with 50 nominations for its several films, 32 of them for THE LADY AND THE STOCK EXCHANGE, an amusing little dramatization featuring some name actors. It seems rather impressive to us that with so many films to choose from, 8% of all respondents recalled and nominated the films of this one sponsor.

The film named second most often was American Banking Association's BREAD, an entertaining case study of the real life money management considerations of two young women pursuing careers as folksingers.

As multiple-film sponsors, the Bell System (various companies were named) and IBM were runners-up to the Stock Exchange. IBM's most-named film was COMPUTER GLOSSARY.